

M. Whitebread's CONTEMPLATIONS

During his Confinement in NEWGATE.

To a Soul in the Body.

Poor Soul, what mak'st thou here? is this the place,
Thou wert design'd for? sure the Noble Race
Thou art descended from, may well require
Better accommodation; and aspire,
To greater matters, than immur'd to stay,
Under a mouldy roof of dirt and clay:
Where thy employment's like to be,
To hear, to smell, to touch, to taste, to see,
Things wholly succouring of flesh and blood;
And are with Beasts, and Birds, a common good.
Mean while thine own good parts are down'd and lost,
To serve the Humours of a peevish Host.
Nor shalt thou please him long with all thy care,
And diligence. For e're thou art aware;
He'll change into a thousand forms and shapes,
And put as many humours on; as Apes
Make mouths and mops: now he's for this, now that,
Nor shalt thou eas'ly know, what he'll be at
Next moment, or next hour. One day he's well,
Another sick to death; so fierce, so fell:
That nothing can content him. Nothings right;
He quarrels with the day, rails at the Night.
As if they were the Authors of his ill,
And bound to come, and go at his fond will.
There's nothing now to do, but weep and mourn,
As if he were a creature quite forelorn;
Destin'd without Reprieve for Grave or Urn:
But possibly e're long the Tide may turn.
And he from discontented, sick, and sad;
May pleasant be, Joviall and halfmad.
'Tis as the humour flows, now cold, now hot,
Now moist, now dry. But still 'twill be thy lot
To wait upon him, and in all his wild
Exotick moods, to tend him as a child:
Careless, soothing, using all the skill,
A Nurse employs to keep her Baby still.
It moves my heart to pity, when I see
Thy understanding, Will, and Memory,
(Parts fit to place thee on a Regal Throne)
Thus undervalu'd; and thou scarce to own
Thy great misfortune: but seem'st to rejoice
As in a thing contriv'd by thy own choice.

But look to't well, for trust me time will come,
When he for all thy kindness, and in room
Of all thy service, will serve thee a trick,
And leave thee nothing but his bones to pick,
From whence thou scarce shalt gather, wherewithall
To satisfy his debts; which then will fall
To thy lot to discharge, as having bin
His constant partner, and his next of kin.
Nor shall he so escape. For he must know
That though he sculks in Grotts, and Caves, as low
As Earth's deep center, 'twill him not avail,
He must appear without mainprize or bail.
And answer to th' Action, which will be
A desperate bus'ness both for him and thee,
For as y're jointly bound Body and Soul;
You both are answerable for the whole.

Rouse up thy self then, and without delay,
Shew him his danger, teach him to obey
Thy just Commands: Make use of spur and rain,
And if thou dost perceive, that he again
Would break loose from thee, hold a stricter hand;
Rebuke, perswade: But quit not thy Command.
And above all remember thy descent,
Make him too capable of the intent,
Of his, and thy great Maker, to bestow
Much nobler things, and greater, than this low
And abject State of Life, you now do lead,
Can promise. Tell him, he must learn to reade
His better fortune in the Starry Globe
Of Heaven, where he a rich and precious Robe,
Of Glory shall receive; if he prove true
To God, and Conscience, to himself and you.
Deal with him so, that he oft casts an eye
Up to that seat of Bliss, where he'll descry,
Things worthy of his hopes, and find desire
And love enflam'd with a celestial fire:
So that when e're he will, or must return,
To treat again with Earth, he'll kick and spurn,
And what he lately did so much admire,
And dote upon, and soon again retire
(treat,
To those great thoughts, wherewith Heaven did him
And oft with tears and amorous sighs repeat:

Base World, wild Earth, how I thee do despise!
When up to Heavens bright Sphere, I cast mine eyes.

SOLITUDE.

Dear Solitude, 'tis thou I see alone,
Restor't Men to their wits, to thee we own
Our selves deep debtors. We had half forgot,
That we were men, till 'twas our happy lot
To light on thee. Now free from those fond toys
That everlasting bustle, endless noise,
The busy World engag'd us in we finde,
W had something else to do, something to minde,
Imports us more, than we as yet perchance,
Had thought well on: Our Life was not a trance?
A waking dream, a spice of the disease
On Brain-sick Lunatics is wont to seize:
Flattering their fancies, causing them to take
Themselves for Kings, Queens, Princes, and to make
Their brags and boasts of strange and mighty matters;
Swearing they're richly clad, though all in tatters:
But rags are Robes with them, Joynd'stools a Throne;
Sticks Scepters are, and scarce half caps a Crown.
Their wooden dish pure Gold; their bed of straw
Embroider'd Velvet: All they say's a Law.

Ay! this indeed is downright *Bedlam* mad,
'Tis very true, and if perchance y'had had
The time and leisure Solitude affords;
Long since y'had found the deeds (if not the words)
Of most Mens Lives, to speak them little less;
Than those now mention'd, and their Happiness
As little real, with this onely difference,
That these in number those exceed, and hence
By vote 'tis carry'd; these are wife and those
Fit guests for *Bedlam*: though (under the Rose)
These quite as Mad are in another kind,
As viewing but what passes, you shall finde.
Mark their designs, pretentions, pursuits, Aims,
At such mean things, as only bear the Names
Of real goods; but are no more the things,
They go for, than the Players Acting Kings,
Are real Sovereigns: 'Tis from fancy that,
Most things their value take. From whence or what,
Is Gold, that it so great esteem should have?
'Tis but a yellow Clay. Yet Lord and slave,
To it must homage give, and half adore:
And he that has thereof the greatest store,
Is held the greatest, the best Man; whereas
He's still but dust, and Gold but dirt as 'twas.

JEWELS.

What Pibbles that? Why don't you see or have,
Its Sun-bright beams dazl'd your sight? then save
Your pains and eyes, and look else where: But know
To this a Prince his Liberty may owe.
Sweet Sir, your pardon, but pray is it not
A Pibble still? or has it lately got
Some strange Enchanting Virtue? to cut glasse
Is that alone for which it famous was,
If that be all, though it shine ne're so bright,
Y're rul'd by fancy, not by reasons Light.

BUILDINGS.

See yonder Noble Structure, which e're while
A *Chaos* was, now 'tis a stately pile;
Where *Greece*, where *Rome*, where *England*, all its Art
Engag'd has, besides kind Natures part
Of choice materials, Marble, best Free-stone,
And things great and rich, as you will own,
But that's of all, the least considerable:
The Art, Contrivance, Symmetry is able,
To raise wonder in the very stones. And
Pray good Sir stop a little, hold your hand.
After this fair recitall, after all
You have or can say, touching this you call
A stately Noble Structure is't not still,
A heap of Stones and Morter? by the skill
Of cunning Workman cemented together;
To enhance the grand design, 'gainst Wind and Weather.
For there are those, who will not stick to say,
A close thatch'd Roof, and Wall well dawb'd with clay,
Your first design, and chief end will fulfill
As well, and as completely, as all the skill,

Which crafty Artist doth employ intending,
To enrich himself by your vain needlesse spending.
Leaving't in doubt too, where the Italian curse
Shall fall upon your head, or empty purse.

To Death.

Death, th'art welcome. For though thou art a Thief,
Instead of Robbing, I expect relief,
From thy kind hand, 'tis long since I have found
Thou steal'st upon me. and dost still get ground.
So that I see, there's little hopes by flight,
To avoid thy pursuit. And although I might,
There is so little comfort in the way,
I still must keep, that I had rather stay
Expecting thy last stroke; than thus remain
In such a dying Life, where such a train
Of miseries, such cares, wants, griefs succeed,
The one the other daily; that 'twere need,
To have a heart of Brass, and Breast of steel,
To bear the cruel brunt. And now the Wheel
Is set a running, 'twill scarce stop its course;
'Till it has hurri'd all from bad, to worse.

So 'tis, and so 'twill be. But, pray, good Death,
Let's make a friendly truce, before my breath
Has quite forsaken me. I find, I have
A little work to do; for which I crave
Some short forbearance. It cannot be long
My cares, my years, now coming in full throng,
Upon my drooping Soul. And first of all,
Provision should be made against the call
Of the Almighty; for a strict account
Of thoughts, words, actions, which must needs amount
To a vast summe: O, what a fearful charge
Will then be brought against me! not at large.
But where each minute thing, each circumstance
Shall be produc'd, and what e're may enhance
Sinns direfull malice, Mercy then no more
Shall act her part: but justice on the score
Of things irrevocably done and past;
Shall give the Sentence: and we then our last,
And endless doom receive. Now this is that,
I crave some respite for. For though't be what
I have long labour'd in, striving to frame
My Conscience so, that it might without blame
Appear before his eyes, who searches all
The close Recesses of mans Heart: yet shall
I gladly once more make a strict review
Of what is past; and in my Soul renew
That just Repentment; which at other times
I seem to have entertain'd against my crimes;
Detesting them, and willing that my blood,
Joyn'd, and in union with that precious blood;
Which from my Saviours sacred wounds did flow,
May wash my sinful Soul, and cleanse it so;
That when before my great Judge I appear,
Well manag'd Confidence may vanquish fear.
This is what I do project. But pray stay,
Take not my first word. For perchance I may
Repent me, and on second better thought
Relolve, forbearance may be too dear bought.
For as there's nothing I so much detest,
As sin: a thousand fears would me invest;
Least so unhappy I again should be,
As to offend my great good God. I see
The dangers are innumerable: The Nets
Are spread on every side: and he that gets
Well off from some, or most, is not secure:
Some crafty Syren him may yet allure,
And cast upon some desp'rat Shelve or Rock:
Which to avoid, may ask a greater stock
Of strength, and foresight, than my weakness dares
Presume upon. Hence day, and night, such fears,
And frights my trembling Soul, must needs oppress:
That life cannot be held a Happiness.
Then welcome Death, by thee I hope to obtain
A better Being, and secure remain
From Sin; that greatest, foulest, blackest Devil
The subt'lest Foe, the only dreadful evil:
Which can a generous Soul befall. The case
Thus then resolv'd is: that though the face
Of Death hath something harsh in't, yet the harms
Life still expos'd to, and the killing charmes
Of Sin so numerous are; that to eschew
Such endless Hazards, 'tis best to renew
Our first Address, and chafe without Reply
Rather to dye, to live; than live to dye.